

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A prepress system comprising:

5 a raster image processor for developing first print image data to display resolution to create first raster image data, and for developing second print image data to the display resolution to create second raster image data;

a data storage for storing the first raster image data created in advance prior to creation of the second raster image data; and

10 a plate image inspection processor for executing a plate image inspection process by comparing the first and second raster image data, and displaying on a display device a result of the plate image inspection process.

2. A prepress system according to claim 1, wherein the print  
15 image data may include a text object, a graphics object, and a bitmap image object in respective formats.

3. A prepress system according to claim 1, wherein the plate  
20 image inspection process includes calculating, for each pixel location, a pixel value difference between the first and second raster image data, and

the result of the plate image inspection process distinctly displays pixels whose pixel value difference is greater than a threshold value, which can be adjusted by a user.

25 4. A prepress system according to claim 1, wherein the plate image inspection processor enables a user to select the first raster image data for use in the plate image inspection process.

30 5. A prepress system according to claim 1, wherein if the print image data includes plural types of image objects, the developing is performed using at least one specific type by not all types of image objects.

6. A prepress system according to claim 1, wherein the raster image processor is capable of re-developing the second print image data after a reference image position for image development being moved by a distance smaller than a pixel pitch at the display resolution.

7. A prepress system according to claim 6, wherein the raster image processor divides a print area represented by the second print image data into a plurality of divisional areas each having an individual reference image position for image development; and

the plate image inspection processor determines independently the plate image inspection result for each of the plurality of areas.

8. A prepress system according to claim 1, wherein the raster image processor develops the second print image data with a plurality of reference image positions for image development to create plural sets of the second raster image data, the plurality of reference image positions being separated by a distance smaller than a pixel pitch at the display resolution, and

the plate image inspection processor calculates, for each of the plural sets of the second raster image data, an image difference magnitude that represents magnitude of difference from the first raster image data, and displays on the display device the plate image inspection result based on a selected one of the plural sets of the second raster image data having the smallest value of the image difference magnitude.

9. A method of executing plate image inspection comprising the steps of:

(a) developing first print image data to display resolution to create first raster image data;

(b) developing second print image data to the display resolution to

create second raster image data; and

(c) executing a plate image inspection process by comparing the first and second raster image data, and displaying on a display device a result of the plate image inspection process.

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10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the print image data may include a text object, a graphics object, and a bitmap image object in respective formats.

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11. A method according to claim 9, wherein the plate image inspection process includes calculating, for each pixel location, a pixel value difference between the first and second raster image data, and

the result of the plate image inspection process distinctly displays pixels whose pixel value difference is greater than a threshold value, which  
15 can be adjusted by a user.

12. A method according to claim 9, wherein the first raster image data for use in the plate image inspection process is selected by a user.

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13. A method according to claim 9, wherein if the print image data includes plural types of image objects, the developing is performed using at least one specific type by not all types of image objects.

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14. A method according to claim 9, wherein the step (b) includes re-developing the second print image data after a reference image position for image development being moved by a distance smaller than a pixel pitch at the display resolution.

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15. A method according to claim 14, wherein the step (b) includes dividing a print area represented by the second print image data

into a plurality of divisional areas each having an individual reference image position for image development; and

the step (c) includes determining independently the plate image inspection result for each of the plurality of areas.

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16. A method according to claim 9, wherein the step (b) includes developing the second print image data with a plurality of reference image positions for image development to create plural sets of the second raster image data, the plurality of reference image positions being separated by a distance smaller than a pixel pitch at the display resolution, and

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the step (c) includes calculating, for each of the plural sets of the second raster image data, an image difference magnitude that represents magnitude of difference from the first raster image data, and displaying on the display device the plate image inspection result based on a selected one of the plural sets of the second raster image data having the smallest value of the image difference magnitude.

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17. A computer program product for executing plate image inspection, the computer program product comprising:

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a computer readable medium; and

a computer program stored on the computer readable medium, the computer program including:

a first program for causing a computer to develop first print image data to display resolution to create first raster image data, and to develop second print image data to the display resolution to create second raster image data; and

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a second program for causing the computer to execute a plate image inspection process by comparing the first and second raster image data, and displaying on a display device a result of the plate image inspection process.

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